



# NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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## Corps continues to fight historic Mississippi River flooding

VICKSBURG, MISS., April 29, 2011 – Hundreds of engineers and technicians from the Mississippi Valley, Lakes and Rivers and Northwestern Divisions, along with scientists from the Corps' Engineering Research and Development Center, are working around the clock to combat flooding stemming from historic Mississippi River levels. The river may set a record level at Cairo, Illinois, as early as tomorrow.

"We are working as regional team of teams to fight this record-setting flood," said Maj. Gen. Michael Walsh, Mississippi Valley Division Commander. "The amount of coordination and collaboration with other Federal and State agencies, our sister Corps' Divisions, and with local communities, has been incredibly important to the success of this flood fight."

Additionally, the Corps remains in a holding pattern regarding moving to the next phase of the Birds-Point New Madrid Floodway operation plan. The current forecast from the National Weather Service indicates a crest of 60.3 on the Cairo gage between May 1-3, with a sustained crest at 60 feet for up to five days. The floodway operation decision point is when the stage at Cairo approaches 61 feet with a continued rise and the integrity of the system is not challenged before then.

"We have more than 200 members of our Memphis District team actively engaged in this floodfight," said Col. Vernie Reichling, Memphis District Commander. "I am extremely proud of their dedication and commitment to this critical mission."

The Corps continues to operate the Mississippi River & Tributaries Project as designed and is working 24 hours a day to protect the citizens of the Mississippi River Valley. The system is performing as designed, however, with the unprecedented level of river stages and huge pressures, some areas along the levee system are experiencing seepage. Engineers and local levee boards are fighting the seepage with sandbag ring levees and water berms to offset the tremendous pressure currently on the levee. Flood-fighting teams are closely monitoring and taking all necessary action to ensure the integrity of the system.

The Corps continues implementing a watershed-wide plan to reduce outflows from reservoirs located on the system. All Corps reservoirs with the ability to impact Mississippi River flood stages are evaluating water releases to help reduce stage levels and minimize impacts to communities along the river.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Mississippi River Commission are coordinating closely with other government agencies, communities, stakeholders, contractors and organizations to ensure the safety and well being of local citizens along the Ohio, Missouri, Mississippi and other rivers in the system.

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